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POLICE FORCES AND BLACK MILITANTS ARE ARMING FOR A SECOND CIVIL WAR

New York, February 13-----The Second Civil War is under way, according to a 45,000 word article in the March issue of Esquire, published today.

Selected black militant leaders are in dispute as to whether the base for revolution should be located in the North or the South, but are in agreement that insurrection is an immediate prospect.

In the Esquire article, author Garry Wills interviews police officials of eight major cities who are preparing their forces for the putting down of armed resistance. Detroit Police Commissioner Ray Girardin, one of the early veterans of that city's racial confrontations last summer, told Esquire, "This is a revolution and people have not become aware of that..."

A detailed study of the problem--perhaps the first fully comprehensive report of its kind--was prepared by Wills who spent two months surveying major trouble spots, concluding that only police officials and black militants are fully aware of the likelihood of war.

Exploring the riot defense situations Wills found himself firing experimental guns, sniffing new gasses, smearing chemical repellants on his face, and climbing over and into new "riot tanks".

In Philadelphia, Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo, with a large budget, a well stocked arsenal and power at City Hall, is in the process of, among other things, training anti-sniper squads to shoot from helicopters.

In Chicago, officials have worked out a system of bus transportation into riot areas, rushing police to the scene of violence and eliminating traffic congestion that would otherwise hamper their efforts.

In Los Angeles, a crack troop of police "mountain goats" used for rescue work on California mountains and in fires and earthquakes, has added a converted World War II M-8 battle car to its fleet.

In Pittsburgh, a permanently activated riot center is coming into existence.

In Kansas City, the police are training merchants to use rifles and pistols.

And in Detroit, Girardin has asked for nine million dollar's worth of anti-riot equipment, money to buy armored vests, machine guns, battle cars.

Wills states: "The Second Civil War is not a possibility but the present reality--anyone who denies that is certainly not telling like it is.

"The presence of the guns makes it imperative to develop limited response weapons and train men in their intricacies, so that police will not be panicked into total response--flexible weapons that allow a long 'escalation' putting off and off the need for heavy arms."

In Baltimore, where Wills lives, he spoke with General Gelston of the Maryland National Guard, one of the many prominent officials who expressed views concerning the raising of riot defense to actual combat levels.

Says Gelston speaking of last year's major riot: "Riots like that in Detroit are not conventional police actions. This is guerrilla warfare; these people have been learning the lesson of Vietnam..."

"The tactics against this kind of rioting are more like city-clearing operations than the old style 'crowd control'--except that when clearing an enemy city you don't care who gets killed on the other side. We have to use all the weapons of combat, yet protect the right of innocent citizens."

The Guard has performed well, but General Gelston has never let his Maryland men load their weapons. He's very quick to use the lower steps of

escalation--gas, bared bayonets. But he says: "These young men are not used to combat situations."

Some of the military machinery being ordered now by city police forces, which would in most cases be used by the untrained national guard are: Commando Police Vehicles (armor-plated vehicles, with eighteen gunports, and carrying a combat crew of twelve); Polycarbonate riot shields and helmets; Stoner assault guns which shoot through walls; new teargas grenades; Chemical Mace cartridges, and Police shotguns.

Wills does not hesitate to point up the major danger in the lack of knowledge of limited escalation tactics. Securing equipment for battle is one thing, but putting it into the hands of persons not fully aware of the involvement above and beyond the single piece of equipment could lead to serious complications.

The article goes on to quote Retired Army General Rex Applegate, the busiest student of riot control over the last decade, and author of the manual Crowd and Riot Control.

Applegate was interviewed by Wills at his out-of-the-way lodge in Yoncalla, Oregon.

Feeling that his manual (which he is now updating) and all government booklets on riot control are out of date, Applegate comments on the problems faced today.

According to the article he contends: "Your task force, or mobile unit, has to be out on normal patrol, doing normal police work, with riot duty just added on. That means that the unit is at least halved at any time because of alternating shifts, sickness, leave, vacation. And it means that riot training

is squeezed into an already heavy work load. What we need is a special unit that does nothing but handle riots.

"People say it is a waste of manpower to have people 'doing nothing' until a riot breaks out. But they don't say that about firemen who 'do nothing' until a fire breaks out. What the public does not realize--and most policemen don't either--is that really effective riot technique is not learned during a week of training once a year or even an hour of training once a week."

Applegate sites as an example: "Most people, for instance, do not really know how to use gas. They'll use too much, or too little, or the wrong kind for the situation or the locale. They do not know about its shelf life, about each gas's limitations. And because they don't know these things, they are afraid of it themselves--afraid they will gas a sick person, that it will get out of control, drift into a hospital or onto their own men who have not been masked. There is a good reason for them to be afraid. But trained gas teams, who know all about their work, would solve this."

Also brought out by Wills' report is the fact that chemical Mace, a small pressurized can that releases a liquid jet of non-lethal but totally disorientating gas, is now in the hands of three thousand police forces and the F.B.I., but in reality Mace was not intended for riot work, but as an instrument of self-defense. And the Stoner gun, a weapon the government is still trying to decide to use in Vietnam, has already been scheduled for use in Detroit if and when a riot occurs.

To all these armament plans comes the voice of the black militant leaders talking in Esquire about revolution and red Chinese submarines in the Gulf of Mexico.

The Reverend Albert Cleage of the Central United Church of Christ in Detroit spoke to Wills summing up the black militants attitude towards the police buildup of weapons.

Says Cleage: "The police, here in Detroit, asked the mayor for nine million dollars' worth of weapons to use against us. I think every black man in America feels that the white man is just at the beginning of using genocide here. But, you know, I think genocide will come much quicker if we just get real passive.

"We've pretty much outlived our economic usefulness; but even so, if the white man thinks, 'We're going to kill twenty-five million black people, but it is going to take fifty million white people to do it', then he begins to wonder, 'Is it worth it?'. "

The Reverend Cleage thinks that the black community must arm itself in order to prevent wholesale killing--much as we stockpile atomic bombs that we may avoid using them.

According to the article, Cleage has mayoral aspirations, but Wills says being mayor of Detroit for him would be like ruling a cinder. The threats of police blitzkrieg on the one side and of guerilla terrorism on the other, are reaching the "unthinkable" stage.

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